Recruiting in the 21st Century
How can the Federal Government become the employer of choice?

Recently, the Office of Personnel Management issued Volume 1 edition 1 of Employment Solutions. This OPM pamphlet is informative and insightful and the articles outlined a variety of topics germane to today's hiring climate. One of the more challenging articles deals with the expanding role of managers in today's hiring climate and what is essential in hiring quality candidates. Outlined below are several key ingredients for managers.

1. Be prepared for recruitment through succession planning and personal involvement in the recruitment process.
2. Understand the attractiveness of your work and why high performers come to your organization to work.
3. Market your organization – outline what you believe is important to candidates. Personal growth, opportunity for impact, training and development, flexible work schedules, challenging work environment, and the use of cutting edge technology.
4. Personal involvement that provides candidates an opportunity to get a good look at who they will be working with or for, and to see if they fit into the culture of the organization.
5. Get trained in contact etiquette, the federal government hiring process, and the various personnel flexibilities in the hiring process.
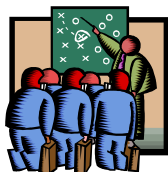
As we move toward a competency based recruitment program it becomes more critical for management officials to be actively involved in the assessment process. Not only is there a need to evaluate the technical competencies of candidates but there is now a growing need to identify general qualities such as communication, flexibility, teamwork, and other key competencies. Working with the Human Resources Office to develop a realistic, effective recruitment strategy is the key to finding the right person for the right job at the right time.

As a manager, it is important to not only develop the recruitment strategy but to make sure that the vacancy announcement is a realistic preview of the job and that it highlights points of interest. Think about what would make an exceptional person want to work for your agency, perform the work you have, and want to work for you! The explosion of the Internet has provided a new medium for recruitment, and with the use of paid advertising the methods of attracting quality candidates to your job have grown dramatically.

Now that the recruitment strategy has been developed and the job has been advertised, we should now train our focus on following through. Make sure you have a system to receive inquiries. Ensure that phones and automated systems work properly and they are staffed with professional, knowledgeable personnel. Prepare a fact sheet containing critical information about the organization, jobs, benefits, the hiring process, and special achievements. Be prepared to follow up with schools, individuals, and professional organizations. This informative process keeps everyone involved in what is going on before, during, and even after the hiring. We can make a difference!!

As we try to remain competitive for the dwindling resources in today's marketplace here are some basic recruitment tips that every manager should have available.

1. Be aware of current labor market trends to include compensation and benefits.
2. Identify your competition and their attraction. Perform a little market analysis to study what your competition is doing in the recruitment process.
3. Prepare a fact sheet on your organization that outlines what your organization does, the types of jobs available, and the benefits.
4. Identify your short-term and long-term recruitment objectives.
5. Develop the image you want to project. Always accentuate the positive. Use technology to your advantage – if possible build a website that attracts prospective candidates.
6. Identify your recruitment need – entry level candidates that are well rounded academically and socially OR senior level candidates with specialized experience and other key competencies.
7. Prepare a recruitment schedule. Consider colleges and universities, recruiting fairs, professional associations, conferences and seminars.
8. Develop alliances with educational institutions including deans, professors, and instructors.
9. Develop a recruitment network that includes referral leads from your own workforce.
10. Know your hiring process and the timeframes involved in the hiring process.
11. Be prepared to make a job offer should the opportunity become available.
12. Follow through on the placement to ensure that all is working well for your new employee.

Maintenance of the Official Personnel Folder (OPF)

Civilian Personnel Operations Center Management Agency (CPOCMA) Guidance Memo Number 99-21, dated 21 Sep 99, directs the filing of **Performance Awards** and **Appraisals** in a separate envelope in the OPF called the **Employee Performance Folder (EPF).** The full text of this memo can be found on the CPOCMA Homepage.

An extract from that Memo is quoted here for your information -- "All **Performance** awards, except the Quality Step Increase, along with the last three appraisals, will be filed in a 9 1/2 X 12 1/2 inch brown envelope (EPF) and attached to the left-hand side of the OPF".

Full responsibility for implementation of this policy rests with the CPOC -- no action is required on the part of the CPACs. Additionally, it is important that CPACs not add to or delete items from the EPF when the OPF is in their possession.

South Central CPOC filesroom personnel are in the process of implementing the policy on a phased basis. Specifically, incorporating the EPF into all newly created OPFs, and adding it to those already in the system as workload permits. From this point on you will begin to see OPFs with an EPF attached to the left side.

Where's My Hammer?
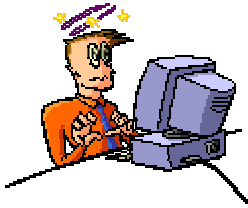
Have you ever had your computer break down and need to check your e-mail? In today's business world, keeping track of all the information that crosses your desk can appear to be a full-time job. Using electronic mail to communicate with your co-workers and colleagues is becoming more and more important. Microsoft Outlook 2000 is a desktop information manager that you can use to organize, find, view, and share information without leaving the program. Knowing how to configure the outlook client on your workstation will allow you to check your e-mail on any PC that is available to you. **Use the following steps:**

- Double click on the Microsoft Outlook Icon on the desktop.
  (The Microsoft Outlook Setup Wizard appears.)

- Select the information service: "Microsoft Exchange Server." Click "Next".

- Enter your Microsoft Exchange server and Mailbox name. The server name for the SC-CPOC is "SCRSV001-MAIL." The mailbox is filled with your system logon name by default. It will only need to be changed if the mailbox you want to connect to is different than your system logon name. Click "Next".
  (For your server or mailbox name contact your system administrator)

- Do you travel with this computer? "No." Click "Next."

- Click "Finish."
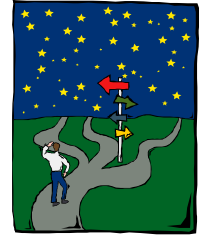
Congratulations you can now read and compose your e-mail messages using your mailbox from another PC.

* On the Lighter Side *

From **FEDmanager SMILE OF THE WEEK**

A young lad was struggling to turn over a wagon that had flipped over on the side of the road, when his neighbor from a few farms down the road stopped to talk to him. "Listen, son," said the old farmer. "It's almost dinnertime, and you look hungry and tired. Why don't you come over for dinner and afterwards I'll help you straighten up the wagon?" "I don't think my father would like that," said the boy. "Nonsense!" replied the farmer. "You just follow me. We'll have a good dinner, and then we'll come back and deal with the wagon." "But I really think I'd better straighten up the wagon now," said the boy. But the farmer insisted, so he followed the man home and had dinner. Near the end of the meal, the boy told the farmer that he'd better be getting back or his father was going to get really angry with him. "Don't worry," replied the farmer, "your father's a good man and will understand. Speaking of your father, though, where is he now?" "Under the wagon," replied the boy.
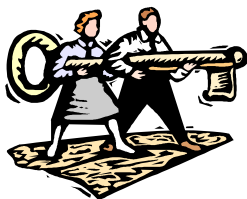
MANAGER'S RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

This guide is provided to help Managers and Selecting Officials accomplish recruitment and selection functions. It was prepared by the South Central Civilian Personnel Operations Center.

To facilitate the recruitment and referral process, the Department of the Army uses the Standard Automated Inventory and Referral System (STAIRS). The commercial product, Resumix, is the STAIRS implementing software. Resumix's sophisticated artificial intelligence matches the skills in applicants' resumes to the skills requirements of specific vacancies. The system is used to develop referral lists of candidates for you. It also generates various letters to applicants. (STAIRS is not used in the delegated examining process when recruiting candidates from the general public.)

INITIATING YOUR RECRUITMENT

When you are ready to fill a vacancy, you begin the recruitment process by submitting a request for personnel action (RPA) either directly to your CPAC via PERSACTION or indirectly through the appropriate office in your activity designated to submit an RPA. In order to target your recruitment and find high quality candidates, the information listed below should be submitted with your request. Your CPAC advisor can help you develop it. This information is also provided in the South Central Standard Operating Procedure for PERSACTION processing.

- Recruitment strategy: What recruitment sources would you like the SC CPOC to use? In developing the strategy, you will need to consider such factors as your activity requirements, pertinent union agreements, workforce diversity, and probable sources of candidates. Also for consideration is any ongoing CA or A76 study being conducted or any higher headquarters Reshape initiatives. Your sources may include current Federal employees, external applicants such as VRA eligibles, Veteran Equal Opportunity Authority applicants,

outstanding scholars, student appointees, and others, or applicants who have not previously worked for the government. Your CPAC advisor will assist you in identifying the sources available to you.

- Description of duties: Are there any special duties or task requirements of the position that are not reflected in the position description? With position descriptions and/or demonstration project level descriptors that are very generic, you will need to provide specific information about the vacant position in order to ensure that skills requirements are adequately identified. Keep in mind that any such requirement must be supported by what is stated in the position description. You still need to be sure the position description is up to date.

- Area of consideration: How widely would you like SC CPOC to search for candidates? You may want to limit the search to your activity or a segment of your activity, or you may want to search in a wider area. Your CPAC can assist you in identifying any local policies that may impact this decision.

- Search option: Within STAIRS, what search option do you want the SC CPOC to use? An applicant search is normally accomplished using the occupational series of the vacancy being recruited. However, if that search fails to yield a sufficient number of well-qualified applicants, wider search options may be used (e.g., search of related occupational fields or the entire database). If too few candidates are located in the initial search, a SC CPOC specialist will contact you to see if you want to widen the database search.

- Cutoff date: Are you ready to recruit? You should only submit your RPA when you are actually ready to recruit. Requests are not held in SC CPOC to meet future cutoff dates.

- Special coordination requirements: Are there any special recruitment efforts that need to be coordinated for your vacancy? You may want to place a newspaper or trade magazine advertisement or have a delegated examining announcement issued for your vacancy at the

same time that you would like to see candidates from the STAIRS inventory. If you want to coordinate the timing of these events, you should note this on your RPA.

- Permanent Change of Station (PCS) expense authority: Are you authorizing payment of PCS costs? Relocation expenses may be a major issue for your selectee. The decision to fund this expense needs to be made in advance and noted in the RPA to ensure that your activity does not incur a financial obligation when you do not explicitly intend to do so.

- Specific position requirements: Are there specific requirements that applicants must meet to be basically eligible for the position? This might include such variables as acquisition certification, maximum entry age for initial appointment to firefighter or air traffic controller positions, gender for health technicians, special licenses/certifications, etc.

- Conditions of employment: What are the conditions of employment which candidates need to be aware of when an offer is made? Examples include security clearance, shift work, travel, licensing, credentialing, drug testing, pre-employment physical examination, etc.

- Selecting Official contact information: Who should be contacted to discuss the job analysis and STAIRS skills set to be used? You will need to provide the name, email address, voice and fax phone numbers (DSN and commercial), and mailing address of the Selecting Official for the vacancy.

THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS
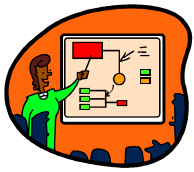
Once the recruitment request is received and Priority Placement Program requirements have been met, a specialist will contact you to discuss the job analysis and STAIRS skills set which will make up your crediting plan. A draft of the job summary and skills set will be created at SC CPOC using the STAIRS technology and will be provided to you for your review and approval.

You have the opportunity at this point to review the list of skills and add those which you believe are missing or delete those which are not particularly critical to the position or which would not likely make distinctions

among candidates. Your specialist will work with you on this process.

After you have settled on and approved the skills set to be used, the SC CPOC specialist will use STAIRS to match the position skills to the skills of those applicants who meet the search parameters (e.g., area of consideration, sources, search option, etc.) specified in your RPA.

If you have an established skills set for this same position, you will be provided with a copy of what you previously approved so that you can review it to be sure it still meets your needs.

THE REFERRAL LIST

The referral list (called a "certificate") is comprised of applicants that are "best qualified" as determined by the number of skill matches and/or the natural break. The certificate will be sent to the CPAC representative along with copies of the applicants' resumes. You may have several lists to select from depending on what sources you chose to consider. Each certificate will contain instructions on the proper way to consider and mark your selections. Your local CPAC advisor will answer any questions you may have about the selection processes associated with the different referrals you receive.

The resumes you will receive are printed from what has been entered into STAIRS. Because resumes are submitted to SC CPOC via e-mail, the product you see with your referral list may not be what you might normally expect a resume to look like. Likewise, hard copy resumes which are scanned in and read via an Optical Character Recognition (OCR) process could contain OCR errors. You should not consider this as an indication of the applicant's presentation of him/herself or of the applicant's ability to spell and punctuate. Rather, you should look at the resumes for substantive content.

MAKING SELECTIONS

There may be local requirements concerning use of a selection panel, interview requirements or procedures,

selection review or other issues associated with the selection process. Your CPAC specialist can advise you if there are any that apply to your situation.

You should indicate a primary and at least one alternate selection on your certificate(s). In the event your first choice of selectee is not available, your CPAC will then be able to proceed with making an alternate job offer without delay.
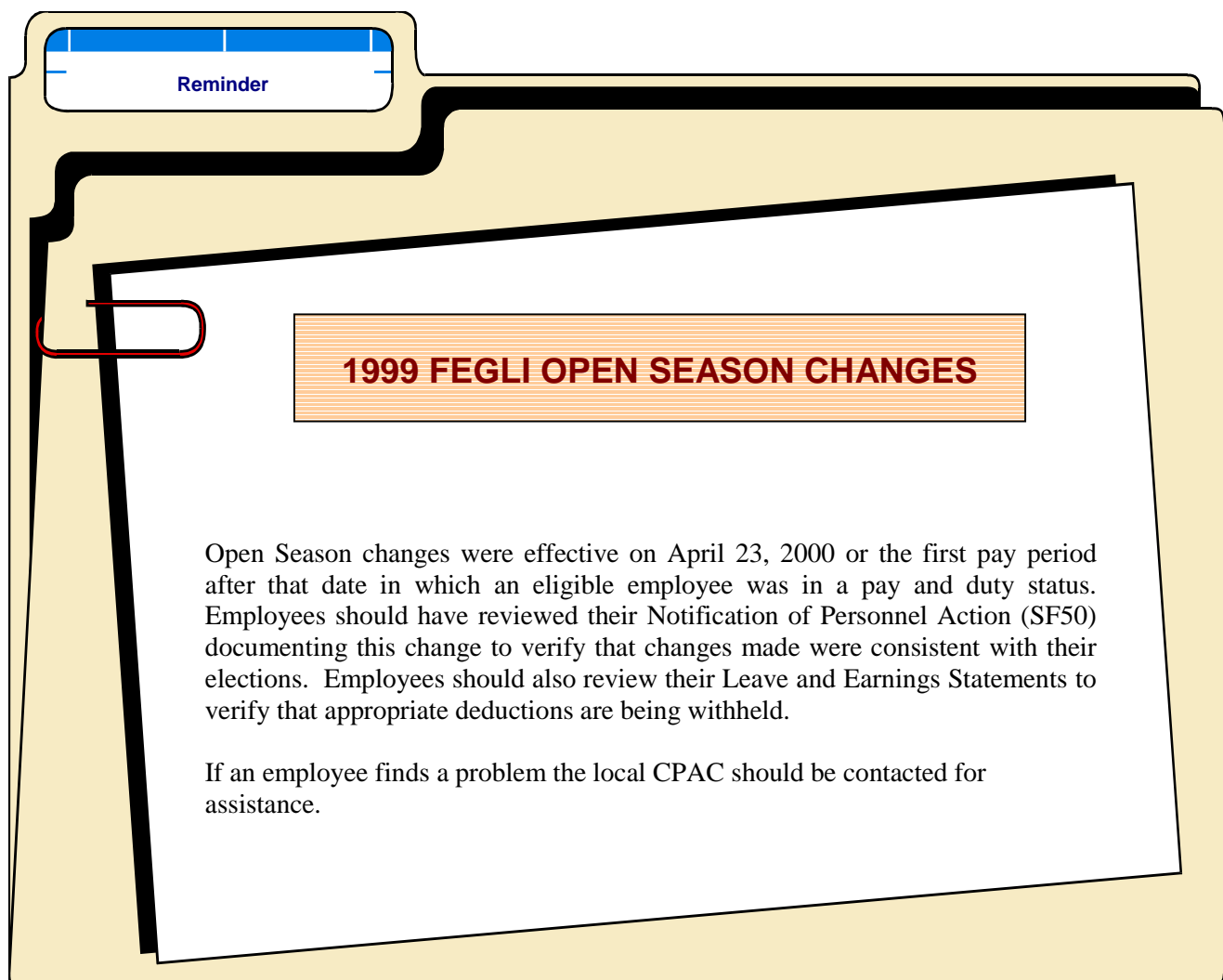
RETURNING THE REFERRAL LIST

When you have made your selection, your CPAC will assist you in determining an appropriate effective date to request, assist you with any pay setting issues, and coordinate the selection with the SC CPOC. The certificate will then be returned to the SC CPOC.

JOB OFFER

Once the certificate is received, the SC CPOC specialist will verify all regulatory requirements are met prior to your CPAC making the job offer to the selectee. You should not make a job offer yourself.

A FINAL NOTE

If the initial process does not yield candidates you are interested in, your CPAC advisor can assist you in determining appropriate alternatives to be pursued.

Reminder

1999 FEGLI OPEN SEASON CHANGES

Open Season changes were effective on April 23, 2000 or the first pay period after that date in which an eligible employee was in a pay and duty status. Employees should have reviewed their Notification of Personnel Action (SF50) documenting this change to verify that changes made were consistent with their elections. Employees should also review their Leave and Earnings Statements to verify that appropriate deductions are being withheld.

If an employee finds a problem the local CPAC should be contacted for assistance.

Read the Directions -- A Novel Idea?

In a recent article found on the GOVEXEC.com website Ms Kathryn Kraemer Troutman discusses information received from an Army Personnel Officer. The point of discussion is the use of Resumix in the Army and underscores some significant issues that all candidates applying for a job should consider. The article is entitled "Just Read The Directions" and is an apt description of the material covered in the article.

As the article implies it is extremely important for applicants to read the vacancy announcement before submitting a resume for consideration under the Resumix system. Applicants often mistake the process with nothing more than applying the right "buzz" words in their resume and they will make the referral list for consideration. Nothing is farther from the truth in that applicants must still meet the basic eligibility requirements as outlined in the job announcement. This means that the use of a patterned resume for a particular job announcement is a wasted effort if the applicant does not meet the basic eligibility requirements of the job.

In reading the basic eligibility requirements outlined in each job announcement there is language that states the minimum months or years of specialized experience required to be eligible for consideration. If the job announcement states 1 year of specialized experience at the next lower grade level and the job being announcement is a GS-12 then this language means you must have 1 year of specialized experience at the GS-11 level to meet basic eligibility for this job. If you have one year of specialized experience at the GS-09 level this is not qualifying experience. Candidates must read the vacancy announcement carefully before applying.

As the article summarizes; the two biggest problems identified are:

1. Not reading the announcement and following the directions on the announcement exactly. The system in place in the federal government is very complicated with many different ways of being appointed.

2. Not reading, understanding, and determining if they meet minimum eligibility requirements. Many applicants are under the false impression that their resume is rated by a computer looking for key words. In the Federal government, a human being must still review a resume and determine if the applicant meets legal and regulatory requirements.

The decision to use Resumix as a DoD standard is based partly on the premise to help speed up the referral process and eliminate mountains of paperwork created by use of the OF612 or SF171 application. The concept behind the use of resumes is patterned after the private sector and meant to allow candidates to develop a single resume that fits their future career goals.

MEMO

Annual Appraisal Due Dates Listed in DCPDS

Rating cycles are normally a year in length, but may be shortened or lengthened in accordance with the TAPES regulation for a variety of reasons. Examples of some of the most common reasons include a change in position assignment, lengthy detail to a position for which no performance plan was developed, early departure of the employee or rater, and employee on long-term training in a classroom environment or on extended sick leave and did not work 120 days under an approved plan. All appraisals are due into the Civilian Personnel Office within 45 days of the end of the rating period. The due dates listed in DCPDS reflect the annual cyclic rating period due dates in accordance with individual CPAC, MACOM and local policies, and Negotiated Labor Agreements.

Some of our customers have been requesting adjustments to the due dates listed in DCPDS to accommodate shortened or lengthened rating periods. Since the date is being adjusted for that year's rating only and subsequent ratings will revert back to the normal cyclic schedule, the due dates listed in DCPDS (or Modern System after conversion) will not be changed.

'THE HRDD WORD'

	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	TOTAL
1556 ENTERED INTO DCPDS	2,708	2,696	4,111	9,515
PTIs PROCESSED	1,221	1,498	1,366	4,085
DCPDS CHANGES	163	30	28	221
TRAIN/DCPDS VENDORS	93	221	119	433
TRAIN ASSISTANCE	321	276	202	799
ED UPDATE	88	659	489	1,390
DCPDS DESIRES	26	84	45	215

TRAINING STATISTICS
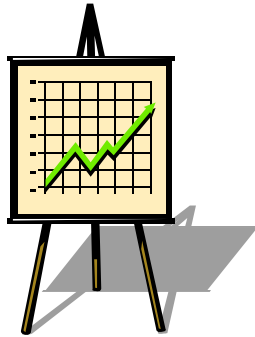
1 Oct 99
1 Jul 00

	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	TOTAL
CLASSROOM COURSES	24	45	52	121
DISTANCE LEARNING COURSES	9	5	5	19
COMPUTER BASED COURSES	4	2	0	6
TOTAL COURSES	37	52	57	146
LOCAL COURSES	14	28	34	76
REGIONAL COURSES	19	22	23	64
SELF PACED COURSES	4	2	0	6

'CHOO CHOO BABY AWARD'

The HRDD proudly presents its coveted, and soon to be retired, "CHOO CHOO BABY" Award to the CPACs at AR-PERSCOM, Blue Grass Army Depot, Ft. Campbell, Ft. Knox, Ft. Polk, Louisville Corps of Engineers, and Pine Bluff Arsenal. This is awarded for your belief in, and willingness to use, TRAIN even when it wasn't always on track. We look forward to working with you when the Modern System OTA is up and running.   Special recognition is given to Pine Bluff Arsenal and Ft. Knox for having used TRAIN to process more than 1,000 instances of training so far in FY 2000.

NEW FEATURES FOR ATNA

It is that time again when HRDD requests that everyone select his/her training requirements for the coming year. The Automated Training Needs Assessment Tool (ATNA) has been remodeled. Major improvements are: a single Master Catalog has been developed which includes **PROSPECT, USDA and CPOCMA** courses; training needs can be entered by person, by course, or by mass training event. An enhanced reports function has been added including a Corps of Engineer Report, Course Roster Report, Enrollment Statistics by Course Title, Individual Development Plan (IDP), Mandatory Training, Onsite Course List, PROSPECT Training, Training by Method, Training by Priority, Training by Quarter, Training Requirements by Office and Progress Report.

T.E.A.M. PROGRAM

The SC CPOC has completed the selection process for its new internal development program titled Tomorrow's Executives And Managers (TEAM). Those selected are **John Heath, HRDD**; **Sara Marsh, ISD**; **Ray Mehling, SSD**; **Cheryl Patterson, SSD**; **Brenda Reed, HRDD**; **Margarett Smiley, SSD**; **Glen Tieman, CD**; **and Bryan Weekley, Director's Office.** The new program was open to CPOC employees at the GS-12/13 grade levels. New participants will be solicited on an annual basis. This program offers formal training, self-development opportunities, and professional developmental assignments to selected participants. The goal of the program is to develop a cadre of individuals that are well qualified to compete for future leadership positions. Congratulations are in order for all the new "TEAM" members!

UPCOMING DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS

Additional information on the following programs is available via the training section of the South Central Region web page at: http://www.cpocscr.army.mil/hrdd/hrdd-front.html

Time Management. 30 Aug (Originally 28 March). This Interactive program identifies techniques and strategies to help participants set priorities and complete tasks on time. *Bonus: Participants receive a time management toolkit diskette in addition to course materials.*

Managing Multiple Tasks. 28 Sep. In this 2-hour, interactive seminar, participants will assess the logistics of their workflow and discuss traditional ways to handle daily and special assignments (including time management, techniques for setting priorities, and tools for managing multiple projects). Participants will assess their personal strengths and weaknesses for managing multiple tasks and identify ways to better use current skills to renew commitment to the things that need to be done.

TRAINING ADVISORY GROUP (TAG)

As a result of the revised deployment schedule of the Modern System, the SC CPOC has rescheduled the External Training Advisory Group (TAG) meeting originally scheduled for 27-29 Jun 00 in Huntsville, AL. We have scheduled our meeting for 26-28 Sep 00 in Huntsville, AL. The session on 26 Sep will run from 0900-1600 hours, 0800-1600 hours on the 27th, and 0800-1200 hours (approximately) on the 28th.

The SC CPOC established the External Training Advisory Group (TAG) in 1997 to obtain assistance from its serviced activities in the development of the SC region's training program. Members are nominated by their installations and agencies and are given the authority to "speak for" their Director at TAG meetings. TAG members should be the persons responsible for the local training program at their installation or agency. TAG meetings provide an opportunity for the development of regional training initiatives and discussion of topics of concern that apply to the SC region.

Some of the topics for this session include:

- Briefings by CPAC representatives on their local training programs
- Automated Training Needs Analysis (ATNA)
- Annual Regional Training Plan
- TRAIN/OTA
- Installation training statistics inquiry tool
- Distance learning methods and opportunities (e.g., TNET, SEN, VTC, Classroom XXI, PBS broadcasts)
- General training topics (e.g., training accounts, site updates, use of government credit card for training, regional training workshop)
- Status report on projects/products initiated in previous TAG meetings (e.g., Training Coordinator's Handbook, regional training, Training Coordinator's list, statistics on projects initiated/completed)
- New DOD-sponsored electronic training payment initiative (Fed Mall)
- Manpower Survey results.

POC for further information is Carol Brigance, SC CPOC HRDD, at 256-313-1759 or DSN 897-1759.

NEW TRAINING TASK FORCE ESTABLISHED

Headquarters Corps of Engineers has been designated as the lead on a new task force designed to examine the Human Resources Development program under regionalization. The taskforce comprised of representatives from headquarters, MACOMs, CPOCMA, CPOCs, CPACs and customers, met April 26 and 27. At that time they examined objectives, issues, taskings, and set milestones. The Task Force goal is to present a tentative report to the Deputy Assistant Secretary Army (Civilian Personnel Policy) by December 15, 2000. The South Central region is pleased to have **Mr. Duane Wolff from Fort Knox as a CPAC representative on** the Task Force.